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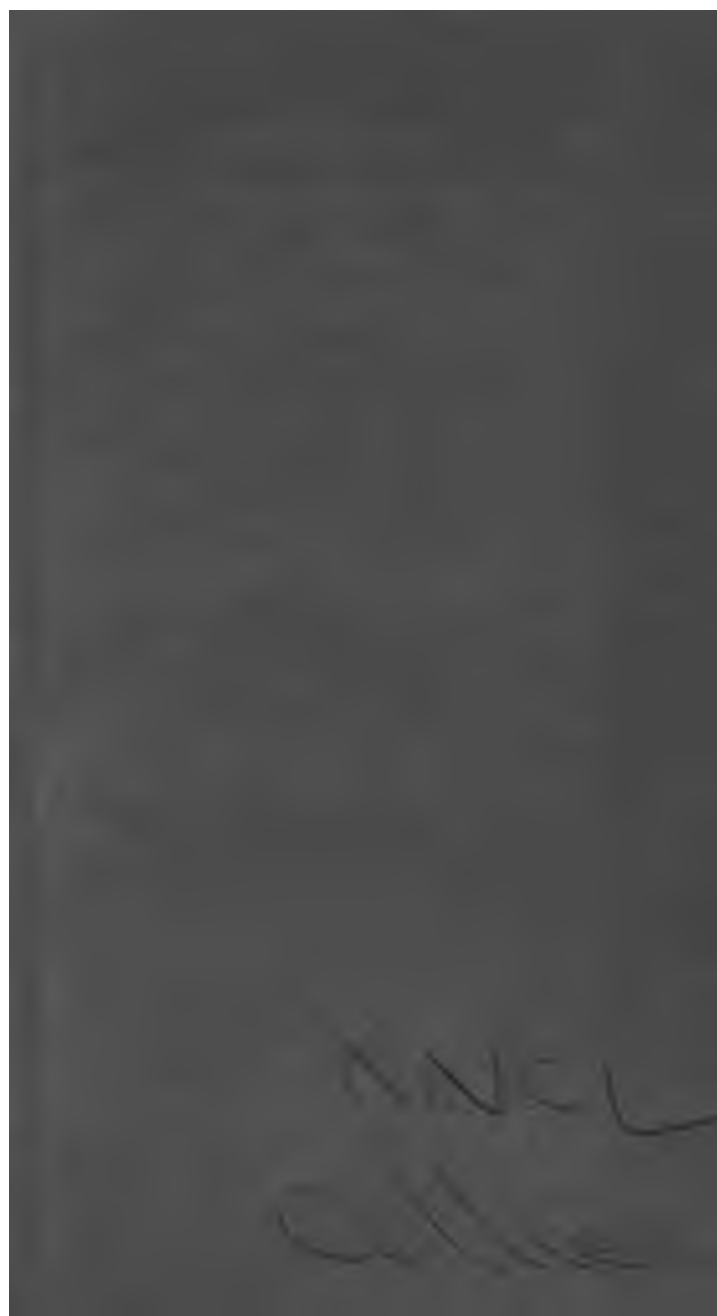
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# NEW FACTS

REGARDING

## THE LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE.

IN A LETTER TO

THOMAS AMYOT, ESQ. F.R.S.

TREASURER OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES,

FROM

J. PAYNE COLLIER, F.S.A.

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LONDON :

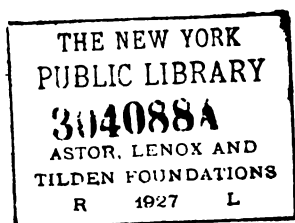
THOMAS RODD,

GREAT NEWPORT STREET, LONG ACRE.

1835.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE principal source from which the information contained in the following pages is derived is explained in the commencement of them.

The form of a letter to a friend, to whom the writer is under many obligations, has been chosen because it allows a degree of excursiveness convenient to the illustration of documents of different dates and of a varied character.

Although every body reads Shakespeare's Plays, as it is doubtful how many may feel interested in these additions to his scanty biography, only a small number of copies has been printed.



**NEW FACTS**  
**REGARDING**  
**THE LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE.**

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**MY DEAR AMYOT,**

IN the "History of English Dramatic Poetry and the Stage" I remarked that "on looking back to the life of Shakespeare the first observation that must be made is, that so few facts are extant regarding him;" and Steevens, the most acute, and perhaps the most learned, of his commentators, stated, long before, that "all that is known with any degree of certainty concerning Shakespeare is — that he was born at Stratford-upon-Avon — married and had children there — went to London, where he commenced actor and wrote poems and plays — returned to Stratford, made his will, died, and was buried." The truth undoubtedly is that there are scarcely any of his distinguished contemporaries regarding the events of whose lives we are not better informed. I supplied a few novel particulars in the work from



which I have already quoted, and I am now about to add others, with which I have since become acquainted, of a most authentic kind and of considerable importance.

I should begin by stating that the most interesting of them are derived from the Manuscripts of Lord Ellesmere, whose name is of course well known to every reader of our history, as Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth, and Lord Chancellor to James I. They are preserved at Bridgewater House; and Lord Francis Egerton gave me instant and unrestrained access to them, with permission to make use of any literary or historical information I could discover. The Rev. H. J. Todd had been there before me, and had classed some of the documents and correspondence; but large bundles of papers, ranging in point of date between 1581, when Lord Ellesmere was made Solicitor General, and 1616, when he retired from the office of Lord Chancellor, remained unexplored, and it was evident that many of them had never been opened from the time when, perhaps, his own hands tied them together.

Among these, in a most unpromising heap, chiefly of legal documents, I met with most of the new facts respecting Shakespeare, which are the occasion of my present letter. I shall accompany the statement of them with other illustrative information, relying upon your love for literary antiquarianism to allow for any false importance which my zeal in the

pursuit of such matters may attach to comparative trifles : to me it seems impossible to consider any point, even remotely connected with the history and character of our great dramatist, a trifle. The motto of most antiquaries ought to be *Esse aliquid putare nugæ* ; and those upon whom they are inflicted, especially if they produce so long an epistle as the present, have often a full right to complain that *hæ nugæ in seriâ ducunt*. My great confidence is in "the magic of the name of Shakespeare."

To make the matter more intelligible, I must carry you back to the period when our Drama was first represented in buildings constructed for the purpose.

The most ancient of these were "the Theatre" and "the Curtain" in Shoreditch, which I imagine were built about the year 1570. The Blackfriars Playhouse (where, in the Winter, Shakespeare's dramas were acted, the performances at the Globe, which was open to the sky, being necessarily confined to the Spring, Summer, and Autumn) was erected by James Burbage, the father of Richard Burbage, in 1576. As early as 1579, the City authorities endeavoured to dislodge the players from this place of refuge, to which they had been driven by the refusal of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, to allow dramatic representations within the boundaries of their jurisdiction.\*

\* The following document among the Cottonian MSS. (Roll xxvi. 41), which did not come to my hands until some time after the "History of Dramatic Poetry and the Stage"

The Blackfriars was supposed to be a privileged precinct, to which the power of the Lord Mayor did

had been published, is curious upon this point, and shows that the Court took a strong interest in the establishment of the Players in the City two months prior to the grant of the Patent to the Servants of the Earl of Leicester.

"To the right honorable our singuler good Lord the Erle of Sussex, Lord Chamberlan to the Quenes Maties most honorable household.

"Our dutie to your good Lordship humbly done. Where your Lordship hath made request in favor of Mr. Holmes for our assent that he might have the apointement of places for playes and enterludes within this citie, it may please your Lordship to retaine undouted assurance of our redinesse to gratifie in any thing that we reasonably may any persone whom your Lordship shal favor and commend. Howbeit this case is such, and so nere touching the governance of this citie in one of the greatest maters therof, namely the assemblies of multitudes of the Quenes people, and regard to be had to sondry inconveniences, wherof the peril is continually vpon euerie occasion to be foreseen by the rulers of this citie, that we can not with our duties, byside the precedent farre extending to the hurt of our liberties, well assent that the said apointement of places be committed to any priuate persone. For which and other reasonable considerations it hath long since pleased your good Lordship, among the rest of her Maties most honorable counsell, to rest satisfied with our not graunting the like to such persone as by their most honorable lettres was heretofore in like case commended vnto vs. Byside that if it might with resonable conuenience be graunted, great offes haue ben and be made for the same to the relefe of the poore in the hospitalles, which we hold vs assured that your Lordship will well allow that we preferre before the benefit of any priuate persone. And so we commit your Lordship to the tuition of Almighty God. At London, this second day of March 1573-4—Your Lordships humble

JOHN RYVERS Maior."

(Signed also by six Aldermen and eleven Common Councilmen.)

not extend, the exemption being derived from times when the site was occupied by the dwelling and grounds of a religious fraternity. In 1579, the Corporation endeavoured to establish a right of executing process there, and of intruding a regular police. Certain inhabitants of the Blackfriars also presented a petition to the Privy Council at the same date, which perhaps led that body to require the opinion of the two Chief Justices of the King's Bench and Common Pleas, Sir Christopher Wray and Sir James Dyer, upon the disputed question. Their decision is among the papers of Lord Ellesmere, and, without quoting it, for it affords no information, it may be stated that it was in favour of the claim of the City magistrates. Notwithstanding this powerful support, it is quite clear that no step was taken founded upon the opinion of these great lawyers, and that James Burbage and his associates continued their performances at the Blackfriars Theatre. They were no doubt backed by the powerful interest of the Earl of Leicester, who had obtained for them the Patent of the 7th of May, 1574; and the following is a copy of the order issued in their behalf by the Privy Council, with which I have only recently been made acquainted.

“ At the Court 23rd of December 1579.

“ It is ordered that the Playeres of the Erle of Leycestre be not restrained, nor in any wise molested in the exercise of their qualite at the Blackfryars or elsewhere throughout the

realme of England, so that they be enabled the better to performe before her Maiestie for her solace and recreation this Xtenmas."

It is not likely that Shakespeare joined James Burbage's Company until seven or eight years subsequent to 1579: he came to London for that purpose in 1586 or 1587, according to the most probable conjecture, and did not begin to write for the Stage, even by the alteration of older plays, until 1590 or 1591. The earliest date at which his name has hitherto been mentioned in connection with the Blackfriars Theatre is 1596, in a petition to the Privy Council, which I first printed in the "History of Dramatic Pœtry," i., 298; but the MSS. at Bridgewater House now enable me to furnish, not only the name of Shakespeare, but the names of the whole Company of sharers seven years earlier, and only two or three years after our great dramatist made his first appearance in the metropolis. Shakespeare, in November, 1589, had made such way in his profession as to establish himself a sharer with fifteen others, eleven of whose names precede his in the list, and only four follow it. They stand thus, and the enumeration is on other accounts remarkable:—

James Burbage.  
Richard Burbage.  
John Laneham.  
Thomas Greene.  
Robert Wilson.  
John Taylor.  
Anthony Wadeson.

Thomas Pope.  
George Peele.  
Augustine Phillips.  
Nicholas Towley.  
William Shakespeare.  
William Kempe.  
William Johnson.  
Baptist Goodall.  
Robert Armin.

This information seems to me to give a sufficient contradiction to the idle story of Shakespeare having commenced his career by holding horses at the play-house door: had such been the fact, he would hardly have risen to the rank of a sharer in 1589, as it indisputably appears he was on the authority of the subsequent document, which must have been transmitted to Lord Ellesmere with others of which I shall speak hereafter.

"These are to certifie your right Honble Lordships that her Maiesties poore Playeres, James Burbadge, Richard Burbadge, John Laneham, Thomas Greene, Robert Wilson, John Taylor, Anth. Wadeson, Thomas Pope, George Peele, Augustine Phillipps, Nicholas Towley, William Shakespeare, William Kempe, William Johnson, Baptiste Goodale, and Robert Armin, being all of them sharers in the blacke Fryers playehouse, have never given cause of displeasure, in that they have brought into their playes maters of state and Religion, vnfitt to bee handled by them or to bee presented before lewde spectators: neither hath anie complaynte in that kinde ever bene preferrede against them or anie of them. Wherefore they trust moste humble in your Lordships' consideration of their former good behaviour, being at all tymes readie and willing to yeele obedience to any command whatsoever your Lordships in your wisdome may thinke in such case meete," &c.


"Novr. 1589."

A brief reference to the circumstances of the time will show how this certificate became necessary. In consequence of the license taken by several companies of players in London to introduce upon the stage religion and politics, by dramas having reference to the Martin-Marprelate Controversy, Lord Burghley wrote to the Lord Mayor in the beginning of November, 1589, directing him to make inquiry what Companies of Players had offended; and on the 12th of November of the same year the Privy Council addressed letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Mayor, and the Master of the Revels, for the appointment of three persons to examine into and to remedy the abuse. Upon this occasion it was that the preceding certificate was sent to the Privy Council to exonerate the Queen's Players at the Blackfriars from the charge. These facts are given in detail in the "History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 271, &c.; and I wish I could there have added the very curious document I have above quoted.

With regard to the sixteen members of the Company in 1589, we are to observe that Richard Burbage at this early date perhaps owed his station in it to his father, (who had built the theatre about thirteen years before), as well as to his own merits as an actor. John Laneham, Robert Wilson, and William Johnson, had belonged to it in 1574, when the Earl of Leicester procured the first theatrical Patent. Of Baptist Goodall, or Goodale, no more is known than

that he was an actor with Laneham, and that his name is found as one of the players in the historical tragedy of *Sir Thomas More* among the Harl. MSS. in the British Museum. Thomas Greene was a native of Stratford-upon-Avon, who is thought by Malone to have been the immediate cause of Shakespeare's application to be admitted one of the Queen's Servants. We shall see hereafter that Greene's introduction was not necessary. John Taylor may have been the father of Joseph Taylor, who obtained considerable eminence as an actor in the reign of James I. The name of Anthony Wadeson occurs in Henslowe's Diary as an author, but as an actor it is here found for the first time. Thomas Pope is well known as one of Shakespeare's theatrical associates, and the same remark will apply to Nicholas Towley, or Tooley, to William Kempe, and to Robert Armyn. George Peele was unquestionably the dramatic poet who, I conjectured some years ago, was upon the stage early in life\*.

\* Peele is one of the Dramatists addressed by Robert Greene in his *Groatworth of Wit*, 1592, which contains the first notice of Shakespeare (under the name of *Shake-scene*) discovered, until I was fortunate enough to meet with the document quoted in the text. Greene charges Shakespeare, in 1592, with altering the plays of himself, Marlow, Lodge, and Peele, and then claiming all the merit of the work. See the particulars collected in a note by Mr. Dyce in his edition of Greene's Dramatic Works, 8vo. 1831. Under these circumstances, it is singular that Shakespeare and Peele should have belonged to the same Company of Players in 1589. In the "History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 285, I have inserted a





Thus we see that in 1589 Shakespeare's name is placed twelfth in the list of the sixteen members of the Company. In 1596, he had so far advanced that it was inserted fifth, when only eight of the association were named: in 1603, he was second in the new Patent granted by King James on his accession. How much weight is due to these locations, and what inferences we may fairly draw from them, it is not easy to decide, but they certainly show that Shakespeare from the first was gradually making his way to greater prominence of station.

James Burbage was buried in February, 1596-7, leaving to his son, Richard (who had then risen to the highest eminence as an actor,) his property in the Blackfriars Theatre. This seems to have been thought a good opportunity for again endeavouring to dislodge the Players; but, although it is indisputable that some of the principal inhabitants of the exempted precinct petitioned the Privy Council for

poem by Peele, spoken before Queen Elizabeth at Theobald's, in 1591. I have since obtained a prose composition, with a few verses, by the same author, and in his hand-writing, which formed part of her Majesty's entertainment on the same occasion. It is a humorous dispute between a Gardener and a Mole-catcher respecting a box with the following enigmatical inscription.

"I was a gyants Daughter of this Isle  
Turned to a Mole by the Queene of Corne:  
My jewell I did bury by a wyle,  
Againe never from the earthe to be torne,  
Till a Virgin had raig'n'd three and thirtie yeares  
Which shall be but the fourthe parte of her yeares."

the removal of what they represented as a nuisance, there is no direct evidence to show that the Corporation of London interfered upon this occasion. The attempt again failed on the counter-petition of the Company, the general good conduct of which, as asserted in the preceding certificate, added to the partiality of the Queen and Court for theatrical amusements, having enabled it to withstand the representations of very powerful opponents. At this date, her "Majesty's Servants" not only exhibited at the Blackfriars but at the Globe in Southwark, which had been open for about two years. From the residence of Richard Burbage in Shoreditch, and from the possession of shares in the Curtain Theatre by one or more of the chief actors associated with him and Shakespeare, it seems probable that, before the erection of the Globe, in 1594, they had occasionally used the Curtain Theatre as well as the Blackfriars, perhaps in conjunction with the Lord Admiral's Servants.

The enmity between the Corporation of London and the Actors at the Blackfriars seems never to have abated, but to have been constantly kept alive by the exertions of the civic authorities to remove the Players, and by the endeavours of the Players now and then to retaliate: the proverbial wisdom of the citizens and the immaculate fidelity of their wives are constant themes in many of our old plays; and, when Leonard Haldiday was Lord Mayor, in 1605, a formal complaint was sent to the Privy Council that some of the Aldermen

had been brought upon the stage by the Company performing within the privileged precinct. Upon this point I have met with the following singular memorandum, which is worth preserving, though it does not directly illustrate the personal history of Shakespeare, and though, as his dramas are remarkably free from attacks of the kind, it is very improbable that he had any concern in the transaction.

“LEONARD HALIDAY Maior 1605

Whereas Kempe, Armyne and others, Plaiers at the Blacke Fryers, have again not forborne to bring vpon their stage one or more of the worshipfull Aldermen of the City of London, to their great scandall and to the lessening of their authority, the Lords of the right honorable the Privy Counsell are besought to call the said Players before them and to enquire into the same, that order may be taken to remedy the abuse, either by putting down or removing the said Theatre\*.”

\* The following, extracted from Lord F. Egerton's translation of Frederick von Raumer's Collections, under the title of a “History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” affords a curious instance of personal attacks upon the stage, very nearly at the date to which we are now referring. It is part of a despatch from the French Ambassador, Beaumont, and it relates, in the first place, to Chapman's Plays, *The Conspiracy and Tragedy of the Duke of Biron*, acted at the Blackfriars: the second paragraph is still more remarkable, showing that the king was not exempted from ridicule by the players; and from the third it may be perhaps gathered, that James I. in his poverty derived pecuniary advantage from the theatres, and hence his encouragement of dramatic performances.

“April 5, 1606. I caused certain Players to be forbid from acting the History of the Duke of Biron: when, however, they saw that the whole Court had left town, they persisted in acting it; nay, they brought upon the stage the Queen of

Hence it is clear that this was not the first offence of the kind. Kempe and Armin were the low comedians of the Company, and perhaps made what was then technically called "a Merriment," or "a Jig," of which the actors were usually the authors, at the expense of some members of the Corporation: sometimes these comic sallies were dialogues, but usually monologues and songs. One of these I have now before me, as it was delivered by Richard Tarlton at the Curtain Theatre, of a date considerably prior to that to which we are now adverting, as he died in September, 1588, but in subject directly in point, since it contains a humorous and satirical attack upon the Corporation of London as the persevering adversaries of theatrical performances. It is contained in a

France and Mademoiselle de Verneuil. The former, having first accosted the latter with very hard words, gave her a box on the ear. At my suit three of them were arrested; but the principal person, the author, escaped.

"One or two days before, they had brought forward their own King and his favourites in a very strange fashion. They made him curse and swear, because he had been robbed of a bird, and beat a gentleman because he had called off the hounds from the scent.

"He has made an order that no play shall be henceforth acted in London, for the repeal of which order they have already offered 100,000 livres. Perhaps the permission will be again granted, but upon the condition that they represent no recent history, nor speak of the present time."

We have no other record of this temporary inhibition of dramatic performances. If the Queen of France and Mademoiselle Verneuil once figured in Chapman's Plays, they were omitted when those plays were printed in 1608.

volume of MS. ballads and productions of the same class, collected, as I apprehend, in the time of the Protectorate, when such pieces were becoming scarce: it was, doubtless, from the great popularity of the author, once in print, but it has not reached us in that shape. It is entitled "Tarlton's Jigge of the horse-loade of Fooles," and it opens thus —

"What do ye lacke, what do ye lacke?  
Ive a horse-loade of fooles,  
Squeaking, gibbering, of everie degree:  
I'me an excellent workman and these are my tooles.  
Is not this a fine merie familie?"

Then he introduces to the audience a variety of fools, probably puppets suitably dressed, still keeping to the same kind of *ad libitum* measure, and at length he comes to the following: we are to presume, perhaps, that he exhibited each successiye puppet to the spectators.

"This foole comes from the citizens.  
Nay, pritheee doe not frowne:  
I know him as well as you  
By his liverie gowne;  
Of a rare horne-mad familie.

"He is a foole by prentiseship  
And servitude, he sayes,  
And hates all kindes of wisdomes,  
But most of all in playes.  
Of a very obstinate familie.

"You haue him in his liuerie gowne,  
But presentlie he can  
Qualifie for a mule or a mare,  
Or for an Alderman;  
With a golde chaine in his familie.

" Being borne and bred for a foole,  
 Why should he be wise?  
 It would make him not fitt to sitt  
 With his brethren of Ass-ize.  
 Of a verie long-earde familie."

This is all that is to my present purpose, but I can hardly refrain from qucting the whole, it contains so much satirical drollery, and presents such curious pictures of the manners of the time\*. It was probably a production of a somewhat similar kind by Kempe, the successor of Tarlton, that excited afresh the animosity

\* I will indulge myself in a note with giving four stanzas, where Tarlton speaks of himself, or, more properly, of a puppet, which he calls "his own son." Those who do not feel interest or curiosity in the subject had better "turn over a new leaf," or, as Ariosto says,

*" Lasciate questo canto, che senz' esso  
 Può star l'istoria."*

Dick Tarlton's lines are these —

" Here is one of the familie,  
 His name it is Dicke;  
 His fathers none sonne,  
 For he has got the tricke.  
 He comes of a fine merie familie.

" He is truely a player-foole,  
 And so you may him call.  
 You may see his goodly conterfeit  
 Hung vp on everie wall.

" You can never misse the likenesse,  
 For everie bodie knowes  
 His father's lovelie visnomie,  
 His two eyes and flat nose.

" He has alsoe, I warraunt ye,  
 His fathers wondrous witt;

of the Lord Mayor and his "brethren of Ass-ize" in 1605. That nothing was done upon the complaint may be inferred from the fact, that the Privy Council Registers of that year contain no entry of any proceeding against the offending Players.

Perhaps the impunity of the Actors in this respect, which encouraged fresh insults, induced the City Authorities in 1608 again to endeavour to establish their right to the superintendence of the precinct of the Blackfriars. Certain it is, as appears by other documents I discovered at Bridgewater House, that the question was then revived; and, besides adducing the Certificate of the two Chief Justices in 1579, the Corporation procured the opinion of Sir Henry Montagu in its favour, and laid it before Lord Ellesmere, with a view to the final determination of the dispute. He indorsed it with his own hand, and the indorsement is material, as it furnishes the date—"23 July 1608. S<sup>r</sup> Henry Mountagu, for the Black-frears." Sir Henry Montagu seems to have relied chiefly on the decision of the Chief Justices, Wray

Soe no more at the present time

There needes be said of it.

He comes of a rare wittie familie."

Tarlton's "counterfeit," or portrait, we know from other authorities, was very common prior to his death. There is a likeness of him in the British Museum, representing his "flat nose" very exactly. This peculiarity is spoken of in his "Jests," on the title-page of which there is also a wood-cut of him.

and Dyer; but Lord Ellesmere called for proofs of the exercise by the City of a jurisdiction within the privileged precinct. Whether he obtained them does not appear — probably not, or they would have been found with the other documents, particularly as one of those remaining is thus headed :—“ Prooffs by record that the Citie of London *hath not* any jurisdiction within the Blacke Fryars, but that it is a place exempted from it.” This evidence had of course been supplied by the opposite party, the Players, but it applies only to the reigns of Edward the First and his son: judging, however, from the result, the “ proofs ” were satisfactory, and the Company was not disturbed.

The inquiry instituted at this date throws a strong and certain light upon the interesting question of the amount of Shakespeare’s property about five years before he retired to his native town, to enjoy in tranquillity the fruits of his genius and industry during the busy period of his life, extending from 1586 or 1587, when he probably first came to London, to 1612 or 1613, when he quitted it.

Defeated in the attempt to expell “ the King’s Servants,” (for this was the title the Actors at the Blackfriars and Globe Theatres acquired by the Privy Seal of 1603) by force of law, the Corporation seems to have endeavoured to come to terms with them, with a view of buying them out; and among the papers of Lord Ellesmere is a minute and curious



account, showing the precise interest of all the principal persons connected with the Company in 1608, and among the rest of Shakespeare himself. It is evident that it was drawn up in order to ascertain what sum it would be necessary for the Corporation to pay to the Players for removal; and it must have been laid before the Lord Chancellor, with other documents connected with the inquiry. Hence we learn that Shakespeare's property in the Blackfriars Theatre, including the Wardrobe and properties, which were exclusively his, was estimated at more than £1400, which would be equal to between £6000 and £7000 of our present money. Burbage was even richer, as the owner of what is called "the fee" of the playhouse, and perhaps he, or his father, had bought the ground on which it stood as well as the building. However, it will be better first to insert a literal copy of the account, and afterwards to offer some remarks upon it. The paper is entitled

"FOR AVOIDING OF THE PLAYHOUSE IN THE PRECINCT  
OF THE BLACKE FRIERS.

- Imp. Richard Burbidge oweth the Fee, and is alsoe a sharer therein. His interest he rateth at the grosse summe of 1000<sup>li</sup> for the Fee, and for his foure shares the summe of 933<sup>li</sup> 6<sup>s</sup>. 8<sup>d</sup>. . . . . 1933<sup>li</sup> 6<sup>s</sup>. 8<sup>d</sup>.
- Item Laz Fletcher owith three shares which he rateth at 700<sup>li</sup>, that is at 7 yeares purchase for each share or 33<sup>li</sup> 6<sup>s</sup>. 8<sup>d</sup>. one yeare with an other . . . . . 700<sup>li</sup>.
- Item W. Shakespeare asketh for the Wardrobe and properties of the same play house

500 <sup>li</sup> and for his 4 shares, the same as his fellows Burbidge and Fletcher viz 933 <sup>li</sup> .			
	6 <sup>s</sup> . 8 <sup>d</sup> .	1433 <sup>li</sup> .	6 <sup>s</sup> . 8 <sup>d</sup> .
Item	Heminges and Condell eche 2 shares	933 <sup>li</sup> .	6 <sup>s</sup> . 8 <sup>d</sup> .
Item	Joseph Taylor 1 share and an halfe	350 <sup>li</sup> .	
Item	Lowing also one share and an halfe	350 <sup>li</sup> .	
Item	Foure more playeres with one halfe share to eche of them	466 <sup>li</sup> .	13 <sup>s</sup> . 4 <sup>d</sup> .
Sum <sup>a</sup> totalis		6166.	13. 4

“Moreover, the hired men of the Companie demanda some recompense for their great losse, and the Widowes and Orphanes of Playeres, who are paide by the Sharers at diuers rates and proportions, so as in the whole it will coste the Lo. Mayor and the Citizens at the least 7000<sup>li</sup>.”

This, you will own at once, is a very singular, as well as a very valuable document, considering how scanty has hitherto been all our information regarding the pecuniary circumstances of our great Poet. Till now all has depended upon conjecture, both as to the value of theatrical property generally in the time of Shakespeare, and as to the particular sum he may be supposed to have realized as an author of plays and as an actor of them. Malone “suspected that the whole clear receipt of a theatre was divided into forty shares,” (Shakespeare by Boswell, iii., 170), and proceeds to guess at the mode in which the money was distributed. Here we have positive proof that, at the Blackfriars at least, the profits were divided into twenty shares, of these

Burbage had	4 Shares.
Fletcher	3 Shares.
Shakespeare	4 Shares.

Hemmings	2 Shares.
Condell	2 Shares.
Taylor and Lowen	3 Shares.
Four other Actors	2 Shares.

Burbage and Shakespeare, therefore, in the number of their shares were upon equal terms : the former as the owner of " the fee " was probably paid the rent of the theatre, which I shall hereafter show, from a document of a subsequent date, was then £50 per annum ; and the latter, as the owner of the wardrobe and properties, no doubt obtained as large a sum for the use of them. Though they are only estimated at half the value of " the fee," yet wear and tear is to be taken into the account. We are to presume that the materials for this statement were derived from the actors, and that they made out their loss as large as it could well be shown to be, with a view to gaining full compensation ; but if each share produced on an average, or (to use the terms of the document), " one year with another," £33 6s. 8d., the twenty shares would net an annual sum of £666 13s. 4d., or somewhat less than £3,400 of our present money. Shakespeare's annual income from the receipts at the Blackfriars Theatre, without the amount paid him for the use of the wardrobe and properties, would therefore be £133 6s. 8d. It is possible, however, that there might be a deduction for his proportion of the rent to Burbage, and of the salaries to the " hired men," who were always paid by the

sharers. To this income would be to be added the sums he received for either new or altered plays. At about this date it appears that from £12 to £25 were usually given for new dramatic productions. Much would of course depend upon the popularity of the author.

We have a right to conclude that the Globe was at least as profitable as the Blackfriars: it was a public theatre of larger dimensions, and the performances took place at a season when, probably, playhouses were more frequented: if not, why should they have been built so as to contain a more numerous audience? At the lowest computation, therefore, I should be inclined to put Shakespeare's yearly income at £300, or not far short of £1,500 of our present money. We are to recollect that in 1608 he had produced most of his greatest works, the plausible conjecture being that he wrote only five or six plays between that year and his final retirement from London. In what way, and for what amount, he previously disposed of his interest in the Blackfriars and Globe theatres it is useless to attempt to speculate.

By "Laz Fletcher" in the preceding account we are doubtless to understand Laurence, or Larence, Fletcher, the first-named Patentee in King James's grant of 1603. The document last quoted seems to have been prepared in the summer of 1608, and Fletcher was buried on the 12th of September of that year. That he

was an actor we know by the will of Augustine Phillips, but upon no other authority, and perhaps he owed his shares in the theatre to his influence in procuring the Patent. Hemmings, or Hemminge, and Condell became leaders of the Company after the death of Burbage in March, 1619. It is a feature in the character of Burbage, that he was a painter as well as an actor. This fact is confirmed by an Epitaph upon him by his contemporary, Thomas Middleton, the dramatist, which I found in a MS. miscellany of poetry belonging to the late Mr. Heber: the collection appears to have been made about the year 1630, and the Epitaph runs thus:—

“On the death of that great Mr. in his art and quality  
(painting and playing) R. Burbage.

“Astronomers and star-gazers this year  
Write but of foure Eclipses — five appeare.  
Death interposing Burbage, and their staying  
Hath made a visible Eclipse of playing.

THO. MIDDLETON.”

This, it must be owned, is rather obscure, but “their staying” perhaps means that, in consequence of the death of so great an ornament of the stage, the theatre was for a time closed. Hemminge and Condell, as every body knows, were the editors of the first folio edition of Shakespeare in 1623. Taylor and Lowen were actors of eminence, and seem to have come into the management of the King’s Servants, first in conjunction with Hemminge, and subsequently without his partnership.

I have stated that at a date subsequent to 1608 the rent of the Blackfriars Theatre was £50 a year : this was the case in 1633, when the Company of the King's Servants held it upon a lease from Cuthbert and William Burbage, doubtless the sons of Richard Burbage, who inherited the property from their father. In that year the Privy Council "entertained the plan of removing the Playhouse, and of making compensation to the parties," ("History of Dramatic Poetry," ii., 50); but when I wrote this passage I was not aware of the existence of the original Report on the value of the property made by the Aldermen of the Ward and two other Magistrates, which is now in my possession, and of which I subjoin a copy in a note, because it may serve as some guide to the worth of the concern at the time of the death of Shakespeare, or when he quitted the metropolis for Stratford-upon-Avon.\*

\* Certificate from the Justices of the Peace of the County of Middlesex about the Blackfryers.

May it please your Lordships. According to the order of this honorable Board of the 9th of October last wee haue had diuers meeteings at the Blacke-Fryers, and haueing first viewed the Playhouse there, we haue called vnto us the chiefe of the Players, and such as haue interest in the said Playhouse and the buildings thereunto belonging (which wee alsoe viewed) who pretendinge an exceeding greate losse, and almost vndqing to many of them, and especially to diuers widowes and orphanes hauing interest therein, if they should be remoued from playing there, we required them to make a reasonable demaund of recompense for such interest as they or any of them had therein : Whereupon their first demaund

It seems by this document that the Company first put a gross sum of £16,000 upon the Blackfriars Theatre and its appurtenances — that, being called

being in a grosse sume 16000<sup>li</sup> wee required them to sett downe particularly in writing how, and from whence such a demaund could arise, and gave them time for it. At our next meeteing they accordingly presented vnto us a particular note thereof which amounted to 21,990<sup>li</sup>. But wee descending to an examination of their interest in their houses and buildings they there possess, and the indifferent valuation thereof, haue with their owne consent valued the same as followeth.

First for the Playhouse itselfe, whereof the Company hath taken a Lease for diuers yeares yet to come of Cuthbert Burbidge and William Burbidge (who haue the inheritance thereof) at the Rent of 50<sup>li</sup> per Ann, wee value the same after the same rate at 14 yeares purchase, as an indifferent recompence to the Burbidges, which cometh to 700<sup>li</sup>.

For 4 Tenements neare adioyning to the Playhouse, for the which they receiue 75<sup>li</sup> per Ann rent, and for a voide piece of ground there to turne coaches in, which they value at 6<sup>li</sup> per Ann, makeing together 81<sup>li</sup> per Ann, the purchase thereof, at 14 yeares likewise, cometh to 1134<sup>li</sup>.

They demaund further in respect of the interest that some of them haue by lease in the said Playhouse, and in respect of the shares which others haue in the benefit thereof, and for the damage they all pretend they shall sustaine by their remoue, not knowing where to settle themselves againe (they being 16 in number) the sume of 2400<sup>li</sup> viz to each of them 150<sup>li</sup>. But wee conceive they may be brought to accept of the summe of 1066<sup>li</sup> 13s. 4d. which is to each of them 100 markes.

All which we humbly leave to your Lordships graue consideration. Your Lordships most humbly to be commanded

HE: SPILLER.

WILL. BAKER.

HUMPHREY SMITH.

LAWR. WHITAKER.

WILLM. CHILDE.

20 Nov. 1633.

upon for particulars, they advanced their claim to £21,990; but that the Magistrates, extraordinary as it may seem, subsequently reduced the whole demand to only £2,900 13s. 4d. There is every reason to suppose that many circumstances, into which I need not now enter, had rendered the undertaking less profitable in 1633 than it had been in the time of Shakespeare, and down to the period when his plays ceased to be as popular as they had been made by Richard Burbage.

In connection with the question of the property of our great dramatist, I may notice another document of some curiosity, which was pointed out to me among the Fines preserved at the Chapter House, Westminster, subsequent to the publication of my book. It relates to the purchase, in 1603, of a messuage, with barn, granary, garden, and orchard, at Stratford-upon-Avon, for £60. In May, 1602, as is stated in most of the recent memoirs of Shakespeare, he had bought 107 acres of land, which he attached to his house of New Place, and in the same month of the subsequent year (as is nowhere mentioned) he made this additional bargain with Hercules Underhill. A copy of the document in its original form is worth insertion in a note. \*

\* *Hæc est finalis Concordia facta in Curia Dnæ. Reginae apud Westm. a die Sci. Michis. in unum mensem Anno regnorum Elizabethæ Dei gratia Angliæ Franciæ & Hiberniæ Reginae Fidei Defensor. &c. a conqu. quadragesimo quarto*



It is known that in 1605 Shakespeare gave £440 for the lease of a moiety of the great and small tithes of Stratford; so that the author of the anonymous tract called *Ratsey's Ghost* (printed without date, but not earlier than 1606) might well make his hero tell the poor itinerant Player, in obvious reference to the success of Shakespeare, "when thou feelest thy purse well lined, *buy thee some place of*

coram Edo. Anderson Thoma Walmysley Georgio Kingesmyll & Petro Warburton, Justic. & aliis Dnæ. Reginæ fidelibus tunc ibi presentibus. INTER WILLM. SHAKESPEARE generosum Quer. et Herculem Underhill generosum Deforc. de uno mesuagio duobus Horreis duobus gardinis & duobus pomarijs cum pertin. in Stretford super Avon: Unde Placitum conventionis sum. fuit inter eos in eadem Curia Scilt. qd predictus Hercules recogn. predicta ten. cum pertin. esse jus ipsius Willi. ut ill. quæ idem Wills. het. de dono predicti Herculis. Et ill. remisit & quietelam de se & hered. suis predicto Willo. & hered. suis in perpetuum. Et predicta idem Hercules concessit pro se & hered. suis qd ipsi warant. predicto Willo. & hered. suis predicta ten. cum pertin. contra predictum Herculem & hered. suos in perpetuum. Et pro hac recogn. remissione quietelam Warant. fine & concordia idem Wills. dedit predicto Herculi sexaginta libras sterlingorum

WARR.

Secundum formam Statuti.

Prima proclm. facta fuit vicesimo nono die Novembris t'mio. Sci. Michis. Anno quadragesimo quinto Reginæ infraser. Secunda proclm. facta fuit primo die Februar. t'mio. Sci. Hillar. Anno quadragesimo quinto Reginæ infraser. Tertia proclm. facta fuit decimo octavo die Maij t'mio. Pasche, Anno regnorum Jacobi Dei gra. Angl. Scotiæ Franc. & Hibn. Regis, fidei Defensor. &c. Angl. Franc. & Hibn. primo, & Scotiæ tricesimo sexto. Quarta proclm. facta fuit vicesimo quinto die Junij, t'mio. Scæ. Trinitatis, Anno primo Regis supradicti.

*lordship in the country*, that, growing weary of playing, thy money may there bring thee to high dignity and reputation \* \* \* for, I have heard indeed of *some that have gone to London very meanly, and have come in time to be exceeding wealthy.*" Shakespeare came to London a penniless fugitive, and returned, "weary of playing" and of plays, to spend his last years in his birth-place, comparatively in "high dignity and reputation," and, if not "exceeding wealthy," with a very comfortable independence. In a previous part of the same paragraph, the author of *Ratsey's Ghost* clearly refers to Burbage as the original performer of Hamlet, (a point now beyond dispute, to the rejection of the claim of Joseph Taylor, whose name has already been inserted) which brings me to another very interesting document preserved at Bridgewater House.

It is the copy of a letter signed H. S., and addressed, as we must conclude, to Lord Ellesmere, in order to induce him to exert himself on behalf of the Players at Blackfriars when assailed by the Corporation of London. It has no date, but the internal evidence it contains shows that, in all probability, it refers to the attempt at dislodgment made in the year 1608, and it was in the same bundle as the paper giving a detail of the particular claims of Burbage, Fletcher, Shakespeare, and the rest.

I do not recollect any instances of letters of a precisely similar kind of so old a date, but they no

doubt exist: it contains a personal introduction of Richard Burbage and William Shakespeare, by their names and professions, to the individual to whom it was addressed, in order that they might state to him their case, and interest him in behalf of the persecuted players. The initials H. S. at the end I take to be those of Henry Southampton, who was the noble Patron of Shakespeare, and who in this very letter calls the Poet his "especial friend." It is natural to suppose that the young nobleman who had presented Shakespeare (if such be the fact, and there is no sufficient reason to deny it) with £1,000 as a free gift not many years before, would take the strongest interest in his welfare. If you feel at all as I did when I first discovered the letter, you will not thank me for this "fearful commenting" before I insert it. It has no direction, and the copy was apparently made on half a sheet of paper; but there can be little doubt that the original was placed in the hands of Lord Ellesmere by Burbage or by Shakespeare, when they waited upon the Lord Chancellor in company.

"My verie honored Lord. The manie good offices I haue received at your Lordships hands, which ought to make me backward in asking further favors, onely imbouldens me to require more in the same kinde. Your Lordship will be warned howe hereafter you graunt anie sute, seeing it draweth on more and greater demaunds. This which now presseth is to request your Lordship, in all you can, to be good to the poore players of the Black Fryers, who call them selues by authoritie the Seruaunts of his Majestie, and aske for the protection of their most graceous Maister and Sovereigne in

this the tyme of their trouble. They are threatened by the Lord Maior and Aldermen of London, never friendly to their calling, with the distruction of their meanes of livelihood, by the pulling downe of their plaiehouse, which is a private Theatre, and hath neuer giuen occasion of anger by anie disorders. These bearers are two of the chiefe of the companie; one of them by name Richard Burbidge, who humbly sueth for your Lordships kinde helpe, for that he is a man famous as our English Roscius, one who fitteth the action to the word and the word to the action most admirably. By the exercise of his qualite industry and good behaviour, he hath become possessed of the Blacke Fryers playhouse, which hath bene employed for playes sithence it was builded by his Father now nere 50 yeres agone. The other is a man no whit lesse deserving favor, and my especiall friende, till of late an actor of good account in the cumpanie, now a sharer in the same, and writer of some of our best English playes, which as your Lordship knoweth were most singularly liked of Quene Elizabeth, when the cumpanie was called vpon to performe before her Ma<sup>tie</sup> at Court at Christmas and Shrovetide. His most gracious Ma<sup>tie</sup> King James alsoe, since his coming to the crowne, hath extended his royall favour to the companie in divers waies and at sundrie tymes. This other hath to name William Shakespeare, and they are both of one countie, and indeede almost of one towne: both are right famous in their qualities though it longeth not to your Lo. gravitie and wisdom to resort unto the places where they are wont to delight the publique eare. Their trust and sute nowe is not to bee molested in their waye of life whereby they maintaine themselves and their wives and families (being both married and of good reputation) as well as the widowes and orphanes of some of their dead fellows.

"Your Lo. most bounden at com.

"H.S.

"Copia vera."

You will not fail to observe that Lord Southampton, (if, as there is little question in my mind,

the letters H. S. are to be taken as his initials) speaking of the performances of Burbage, makes use of a celebrated expression from *Hamlet*, (Act iii., sc. 2), where the Prince is giving directions to the Players—"Suit the action to the word and the word to the action"—which contains in one short sentence the whole art and mystery of dramatic personation. It was applicable to Burbage upon all accounts, but especially as the first representative of Hamlet: that he was so, we know, not only from the positive assertion of the Epitaph upon Burbage, ("History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 430), but from the author of *Ratsey's Ghost*, a tract I have already quoted:—"Get thee to London, (said Ratsey to the country actor) for, *if one man were dead*, they will have much need of such as thou art: there would be none in my opinion fitter than thyself to play his parts. My conceit is such of thee, that I durst all the money in my purse on thy head *to play Hamlet with him* for a wager." \*

\* It is doubtful, from the Epitaph on Burbage, inserted in the "History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 430, whether the words "cruel Moor" apply to Othello or Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*; but the following eulogy upon Burbage, at the end of a ballad founded upon Shakespeare's play, and entitled *The Tragedie of Othello the Moore*, settles the point, and is otherwise very interesting in reference to the obligations of Shakespeare to Burbage. It is contained in the MS. volume of ballads from which I have already quoted part of "a Jig" by Richard Tarlton.

"Dicke Burbidge, that most famous man,  
That Actor without peare,  
With this same part his course began,  
And kept it many a yeare.

This was written about 1606, and Hamlet was produced about 1603. Lord Southampton a little overshoot the mark when he said in 1608 that the Blackfriars Playhouse had been built fifty years: certain "rooms" in the precinct were first converted into a theatre in 1576, so that it had not been built more than two-and-thirty years.

With respect to Shakespeare, the preceding letter presents several points worthy of note, which cannot fail to have struck you. One is that upon which I have remarked before, viz. that Lord Southampton calls our great Poet his "especial friend;" for any nobleman might well be vain of familiarity with such a man, and ought to consider it a privilege to be able to lay him under an obligation.

Next he says that Shakespeare had been "*'till of late an actor of good account* in the company," which may serve to settle the question what was his rank

Shakespeare was fortunate, I trow,  
That such an actor had:  
If we had but his equall now  
For one I should be glad."

This I apprehend was written by Thomas Jordan, himself an actor, who no doubt had often seen Burbage. If the line, "With this same part his course began," is to be taken literally, *Othello* was a much earlier play than Malone supposed it when he fixed it in 1604. I wish I could insert the whole of the ballad, as well as some others connected with Shakespeare's productions — one of them on the same story as *The Tempest*, and perhaps preceding it in point of date; but it would lead me too far from my present purpose, and I shall reserve them.

among his fellows in that capacity: had Shakespeare deserved any thing like the praise merited by Burbage, Lord Southampton would have chosen other terms by which to characterize his performances; and we may reckon it a fortunate circumstance that his moderate success as an actor perhaps led him to apply himself with more assiduity to dramatic composition. The celebrity of Burbage is recorded, but the fame of Shakespeare is imperishable. The language of Lord Southampton certainly decides that our great poet had recently quitted the stage, and we may conclude, therefore, contrary to the received opinion, that he remained a performer for some time after his name appeared in the list at the end of Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*, as acted in 1603.

I pass over, as unimportant with our present convictions, Lord Southampton's then valuable testimony to the excellence of some of Shakespeare's productions, and to the satisfaction Queen Elizabeth had derived from the representation of them; but his letter establishes that the Burbages were originally from Warwickshire, if not from Stratford-upon-Avon, although, if Richard Burbage were born in Holywell Street, Shoreditch, as has been conjectured, it could hardly be said that he and Shakespeare were "almost of one town." A John Burbage, perhaps the father of James, and the grandfather of Richard, was Bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1555. No registration of the birth of Richard Burbage is to be

found in the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch; but Malone and Chalmers (Shakespeare, by Boswell, iii., 183 and 467), concluded, nevertheless, that he was born in Holywell Street about the year 1570. This may be the fact, but there is nothing to show that James Burbage came to London before 1570, nor that his son Richard was not born in Warwickshire. I should infer, from the expression of Lord Southampton, that Richard Burbage was born in Warwickshire, near Stratford-upon-Avon: if not, how could they both be "of one county?" This circumstance, supposing Thomas Greene, another member of the Company, and an author,\* had not been Shake-

\* His popularity as an author seems to have been nearly on a par with his celebrity as an actor; and in a ballad on the death of Queen Elizabeth, called "A mournfull Dittie entituled Elizabeths losse, together with a welcome to King James," printed for T. P. (*i. e.* Thomas Paviour), without date, his name is united with two great contemporaries.

"You Poets all, brave Shakespeare, Johnson, Greene,  
Bestow your time to write for Englands Queene.

Lament, lament &c.

"Returne your songs and Sonnets and your sayes  
To set forth sweete Elizabeth's praise.

Lament, lament," &c.

Excepting for this notice of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Greene, the production is utterly worthless, the author observing neither measure nor rhyme. The original was in the collection of Mr. Heber, one of the last acts of whose life was to copy it out for me. I have since compared it with the original. Thomas Greene, the writer of "A Poets Vision and a Princes Glorie," on the accession of James I., must of course be meant, because the celebrated Robert Greene had been dead more than ten years when James I. came to the Crown.



speare's countryman, or had never existed, would be sufficient to explain why he joined the Lord Chamberlain's (afterwards the King's) Servants when he first visited London in 1586 or 1587.


All this you will allow to be matter of great interest to every lover of Shakespeare. When first I obtained permission to look through the Bridgewater MSS. in detail, I conjectured that it would be nearly impossible to turn over so many state-papers, and such a bulk of correspondence, private and official, without meeting with something illustrative of the subject to which I have devoted so many years; but I certainly never anticipated being so fortunate as to obtain particulars so new, curious, and important, regarding a Poet who, above all others, ancient or modern, native or foreign, has been the object of admiration. When I took up the copy of Lord Southampton's letter and glanced over it hastily, I could scarcely believe my eyes, to see such names as Shakespeare and Burbage in connection in a manuscript of the time. There was a remarkable coincidence also in the discovery, for it happened on the anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and death. I will not attempt to describe my joy and surprise, and I can only liken it to the unexpected gratification I experienced two or three years ago, when I turned out, from some ancient depositories of the Duke of Devonshire, the original designs of Inigo Jones, not only for the scenery, but for the dresses and characters of

the different masques by Ben Jonson, Campion, Townshend, &c. presented at Court in the reigns of our first James and Charles. The sketches were sometimes accompanied by explanations in the handwriting of the great artist, a few of which incidentally illustrate Shakespeare, who however was never employed for any of these royal entertainments: annexed to one of the drawings was the following written description, from whence we learn how the actor of the part of Falstaff was usually habited in the time of Shakespeare.

“Like a Sr. Jon Falsstaff: in a roabe of russet, quite low, with a great belley, like a swollen man, long moustacheos, the sheows [shoes] shorte, and out of them great toes like naked feete: buskins to sheaw a great swollen leg. A cupp coming fourth like a beake — a great head and balde, and a little cap *alla Venetiane*, greay—a rodd and a scroule of parchment.”

The character here described was that of the representative of Good-fellowship, and it was probably not meant that it should bear more than a general resemblance to Falstaff: we may conclude, besides his corpulency, that he wore russet, moustaches, buskins, and that his large bald head was sometimes covered with a small grey Venetian cap. In the plate before *Kirkman's Drolls*, 1672, he is represented with a large cup in his hand.

But I am not yet come to an end of my recent acquisitions respecting Shakespeare from the unexplored archives at Bridgewater House. In an original



Entry Book of Patents, and Warrants for Patents, kept by William Tuthill, "the riding clerk," containing lists of all that had passed the Great Seal while it was in the hands of Lord Ellesmere in 1609, I read the following item, which, taken by itself, does not appear of much importance.

"A Warrant for Robert Daborne and others, the Queene's Servants, to bring up and practise Children in Plaies by the name of the Children of the Queen's Revells, for the pleasure of her Majestie, 4o. Janij Anno Septimo Jacobi."

I remembered that Philip Rosseter, the Lutinist, had obtained a Patent of the very same date and for the very same purpose, (vide "History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 372) and it struck me as extraordinary that there should be two concurrent grants. I knew, also, whatever might be Daborne's circumstances in 1609, that he was in great want in 1613 or 1614, when he was imploring Henslowe not to forsake him "in his extremity," (Mal: Shakespeare, by Boswell, iii., 336), so that he could not then have been in possession of funds to enable him to enter into such a speculation. I subsequently found, however, that he had, or was to have had, partners in the undertaking, one of them being William Shakespeare, another Nathaniel Field, the celebrated actor and dramatist, and a third Edward Kirkham, whose name had been in a previous Warrant for the instruction of the Children of the Queen's Revels, a copy of which is inserted in the "History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 353.

It has hitherto been thought by every body acquainted with the subject that Shakespeare confined his efforts, both as author and actor, to the two theatres occupied by the King's Servants, the Blackfriars and the Globe. I still believe that such was the fact, for reasons I shall assign presently, notwithstanding the evidence to the contrary, afforded by the following document, which came earliest to my hands. It purports to be a draft either for a Patent or a Privy Seal, and runs thus :

" Right trusty and welbeloved &c. James &c. To all Mayors, Sherriffs, Justices of the peace &c. Whereas the Queene our dearest wife hath for her pleasure and recreation appointed her Servaunts Robert Daiborne &c. to provide and bring upp a convenient number of Children who shall be called the children of her Maiesties Revells, knowe ye that we haue appointed and authorized and by these presents doe appoint and authorize the said Robert Daiborne, William Shakespeare, Nathaniel Field and Edward Kirkham from time to time to provide and bring upp a convenient number of Children, and them to instruct and exercise in the quality of playing Tragedies Comedies &c. by the name of the Children of the Revells to the Queene, within the Black fryers in our Citie of London or els where within our realme of England. Wherefore we will and commaund you and everie of you to permitt her said Servaunts to keepe a convenient number of Children by the name of the Children of the revells to the Queene, and them to exercise in the qualitie of playing according to her royall pleasure. Provided alwaies that no playes &c shall be by them presented, but such playes &c as have received the approbation and allowance of our Maister of the Revells for the tyme being. And these our lres. shall be your sufficient warrant in this behalfe. In witnesse whereof &c. 4<sup>o</sup> die Janij 1609."

After reading this document, several suggestions instantly present themselves. First, that the entry in the official book of Lord Ellesmere, kept by William Tuthill, only mentions the name of Daborne, omitting Shakespeare, Field, and Kirkham; but this might possibly be accounted for by the circumstance that, in the first part of the draft, Daborne only is spoken of, his associates being named afterwards: this of itself seems a singular irregularity, for the usual course would be first to enumerate all the parties, and then, for the sake of brevity, inserting the first, to imply the rest by the "&c." However, this would be a trifle, if it did not appear on the face of the draft that it was never carried into effect as far as regards Shakespeare, though it might pass the Seal in favour of the rest, as it certainly did in favour of "Daborne and others," who are mentioned in the Clerk's entry. That entry was not made until the official instrument was prepared and ready for delivery; and at the end of the list of a certain number of them, the name of the person receiving them and carrying them from the office is constantly subscribed. Should we ever recover this document, of course we should see who were Daborne's partners, designated in the entry by the words "and others;" but there can be little doubt that Shakespeare was not one of them. At the bottom of the draft the word "stayed" has been written, which proves that there was at least some hesitation in passing the Warrant.

Then it may be asked, how it happens that the name of Shakespeare is found in the draft? This answer may be given, and perhaps it is the true one:—that the destruction of the Blackfriars Theatre was about this date, or a very little earlier contemplated, and that Shakespeare projected the transference of his interest, or part of it, to a different dramatic concern; because, although the Blackfriars is specifically mentioned, the words “or elsewhere within our realm of England” are added, so that the Children of the Queen’s Revels might in fact perform in any English Theatre.\* When, however, it turned out that the Corporation of London could not succeed in their design of expelling the King’s Servants from the privileged precinct of the Blackfriars, Shakespeare might resolve, as long as he remained in London, to continue his old connexion, as we

\* Neither were these theatrical “children” necessarily always young. In the State Paper Office is a letter from Ignatius Jurdain, Mayor of Exeter, (indorsed “June, 1618”) to Sir Thomas Lake, “Principal Secretary to his Majesty,” complaining that John Daniel, (of whom I shall have something more to say by and by), had come to that city, and, showing his Patent, had claimed a right to perform there. The Mayor refused his permission, on the ground that the Patent was only for “Children of the Revels,” whereas, in the whole company there were only five youths, and the rest men of thirty, forty, and fifty years old. He had, however, presented them with four angels, with which they seemed content, but, as he afterwards heard that they threatened to write to the Privy Council, complaining of obstruction, he had determined to be before-hand with them. He annexes to his letter a copy of the Patent of the 17th of July, 13, Jac. I.

know that he did to the last. This is the most plausible conjecture I can form, and it is somewhat supported by the circumstance that in the Privy Seal to Rosseter it was expressly stipulated that the Children were to perform at the Whitefriars Theatre, which had been erected about the same time as the Blackfriars Theatre.

The Whitefriars Theatre was likewise in a liberty out of the jurisdiction of the Lord Mayor. We have no information at all precise when it was built; but I apprehend that it arose out of the persecution of the Players by the Corporation in 1575. In 1613, Sir George Buc, Master of the Revels, received a fee of £20 for his permission to re-build it; and I have in my possession an original survey of some part of the precinct, made in March, 1616, which contains the following paragraph regarding the Theatre in the Whitefriars.

"The Theater is situate near vnto the Bishoppes House, and was in former times a hall or refectorie belonging to the dissolved Monastery. It hath beene vsed as a place for the presentation of playes and enterludes for more then 30 yeares, last by the Children of her Majestie. It hath little or no furniture for a playhouse, saving an old tottered curten, some decayed benches, and a few worne out properties and peeces of Arras for hangings to the stage and tire house. The raine hath made its way in and if it bee not repaired, it must soone be plucked downe, or it will fall."

This document was not in my hands when I printed my book, or I should of course have inserted it. One of the last plays performed in the Whitefriars Theatre

was doubtless Nathaniel Field's *Woman is a Weather-cock*, printed in 1612, but written before 1611. Field was one of the partners of Daborne mentioned in the draft of the Warrant found at Bridgewater House. I explain the apparently concurrent grants to Daborne and Rosseter, dated 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 1609, by supposing that they were in fact one and the same, and that Shakespeare having seceded, because the King's Servants were not disturbed, Daborne took Rosseter in his place. Daborne was the author of several plays, two of which only were printed; and in the preface to one of them—*A Christian turn'd Turk*, 1612—he says, “my own descent is not obscure, but generous;” and it is likely that he obtained the grant in question by some influence at Court: his name, as Manager or joint Manager of a Company, is only found among Lord Ellesmere's Papers.

But for the entry in the book by William Tuthill, I should have concluded, from the word “stayed” at the bottom of the draft, and from other circumstances, that the intention to grant a Patent or Privy Seal for the purpose stated had never been carried into execution. At the foot of the same paper is the subsequent enumeration of theatres at that time open in the metropolis and its neighbourhood.

“Bl. Fr. and Globe Wh. Fr. and Parish Garden Curten and Fortune Hope and Swanne	}	All in or neare London.”
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This list seems to show that the number of existing playhouses was taken into consideration, perhaps by the Lord Chancellor, and that he was deterred from at once complying with the wishes of Daborne and his Associates, by the consideration that no more places of dramatic entertainment were required "in and near London." This remark may be partly answered, by recollecting that it was not proposed to open any new theatre, but merely to give an opportunity to the Children of the Queen's Revels to perform at the Blackfriars, in the same way as we know that the Children of the King's Revels did perform there in the beginning of the reign of James I. The juxtaposition of the names of the eight different theatres, as above, leads to the conclusion that the same set of comedians occupied two, and they could therefore hardly be said to be open all at the same time. We are sure that such was the case with the King's Servants at the Blackfriars and at the Globe, and we may with sufficient safety presume the same of the rest. The most doubtful in this respect are the two last — the Hope and the Swan — which were both in Southwark, very near each other, and probably both in the hands of Philip Henslowe, the old pawn-broking manager, to whose Diary we owe so many particulars regarding old plays, players, and playhouses.

Another observation upon the draft of the Warrant to Daborne, Shakespeare, Field, and Kirkham, can hardly have failed to impress you; I allude to the

reservation of the authority of "our Master of the Revels for the time being," in inspecting and approving the plays to be represented. "Our Master of the Revels" would of course be the King's officer, Edmund Tylney; but it seems strange that his allowance for the performances of the Children of the Queen's Revels should have been required, when it has been clearly shown ("History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 353) that, in 1603, Samuel Daniel, the poet, who perhaps ranks next to Shakespeare, Spenser, and Jonson, had been expressly appointed to supervise the productions intended to be brought out by the Children of the Queen's Revels, under King James's Patent to Kirkham, Hawkins, Kendall, and Payne, in 1603. This was certainly an infringement upon the long established authority of the King's Master of the Revels, and possibly in 1609 it was intended to restore his power.

At Bridgewater House are preserved two original letters from Samuel Daniel to Lord Ellesmere, both of them very interesting, but one of them especially so, inasmuch as one paragraph in it refers expressly to Shakespeare, though not by name. They are both without dates, but circumstances enable us, I think, to fix them pretty exactly. Lord Ellesmere seems to have been Daniel's patron, and, if I mistake not, was the means of procuring for him the appointment of Master of the Queen's Revels and inspector of the plays to be represented by the juvenile performers.

It seems that Daniel had competitors for this office, one of whom was certainly Michael Drayton, the Poet; and the other, in all probability, from the particular expressions used, Shakespeare. The whole of the letter well deserves quotation, and I therefore insert it. It is addressed

“To the right honorable S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Egerton, knight, Lord Keeper of the Great Seale of England.

“I will not indeavour, Right honorable, to thanke you in wordes for this new great and unlookt for favor shown vnto me, whereby I am bound to you for ever, and hope one day with true harte and simple skill to prove that I ame not vn-mindfull. Most earnestly doe I wish I could praise as your Honor has knowne to deserue, for then should I, like my maister Spenser, whose memorie your Honor cherisheth, leave behinde me some worthie worke, to be treasured by posterity. What my pore Muse could performe in haste is here set downe, and though it be farre below what other poets and better pens have written, it cometh from a gratefull harte and therefore may be accepted. I shall now be able to live free from those cares and troubles that hetherto have bene my continuall and wearisome companions. But a little time is past since I was called vpon to thanke your Honor for my brothers advancement, and now I thanke you for myne owne; which double kindnes will alwaies receive double gratefulnes at both our handes. I cannot but knowe that I am lesse deserving then some that sued by other of the nobility vnto her Ma<sup>tie</sup> for this roome: if M. Draiton, my good friend, had bene chosen, I should not have murmured, for sure I ame he wold have filled it most excellentlie: but it seemeth to myne humble iudgement that one who is the authour of playes now daylie presented on the public stages of London, and the possessor of no small gaines, and moreover him selfe an Actor in the Kings Companie of Comedians, could not with reason pretend to be M<sup>r</sup>. of the Queenes Ma<sup>ties</sup> Revells, for as much

as he wold sometimes be asked to approve and allow of his owne writings. Therefore, he, and more of like quality, cannot justlie be disappointed because through your Honors gracious interposition the chance was haply myne. I owe this and all else to your honor, and if ever I have time and abilitie to finish anie noble vndertaking, as God graunt one daye I shall, the worke will rather be your Honors then myne. God maketh a poet, but his creation would be in vaine if patrons did not make him to live. Your Honor hath ever showne your self the friend of desert, and pity it were if this shold be the first exception to the rule. It shall not be, while my pore witt and strength doe remaine to me, though the verses which I now send be indeede no prooffe of myne abilitie. I onely intreat your Honor to accept the same, the rather as an earnest of my good will then as an example of my good deede. In all things I am your Honors

“Moste bounden in dutie and observaunce,

“SAMUEL DANYEL.”

The passage in this letter that I conceive applies to Shakespeare is that where, after mentioning Drayton as a candidate for the place of Master of the Queen's Revels, Daniel speaks of another person who had endeavoured to procure it, who was the author of plays in a course of daily performance, who had realized wealth by the profession, and who was himself an actor in the King's Company. This description could apply to no other member of that association but Shakespeare. Ben Jonson, whose *Sejanus* was acted by the King's Servants in 1603\*, had quitted

\* It is worth adding in a note that, among other MSS. at Bridgewater House, is preserved an original copy of Ben Jonson's "Expostulation with Inigo Jones," in the hand-writing of the author, and corresponding very exactly (some words only

the stage before that date, and it is besides known that he was then far from rich: in February 1602-3, he was "living upon one Townshend," according to a piece of evidence adduced in the "History of Dramatic Poetry," i., 334. What "other of the nobility" had supported Shakespeare's claim to the new office (for we never before nor afterwards hear of the Master of the Queen's Revels) does not appear, but most likely it was the Earl of Southampton. Daniel was appointed on the 30th of January, 1603, so that the

excepted) with the copy printed by Mr. Gifford [Ben Jonson's Works, viii., 116] although that critic contended that only "some part" of it proceeded from Jonson's pen. Mr. Gifford was naturally anxious to deny its authenticity, because he had denied that Ben Jonson meant Inigo Jones, by Lantern Leatherhead in *Bartholomew Fair*. Hence, in fact, "*Lantern Lerry*," or *Lantern Leathery*, became the nick-name of Jones, and Ben Jonson applies it to him in this very *Expostulation*, coupling it with a mention of Adam Overdo in *Bartholomew Fair*. When Mr. Gifford had made up his mind upon a point, no evidence, however clear, could unconvince him. Two or three verbal variations may be pointed out. Ben Jonson's original copy reads —

"You'd be an Assinigo by your ears?  
Why much good do't you; be what *beast* you will  
You'll be, as Langley said, 'an Inigo still.'"

The printed copy has *part* for *beast*. Again,

"No velvet *sheath* you wear will alter kind,  
A wooden dagger is a dagger of wood," &c.

The printed copy has *suit* for *sheath*. Farther on,

"The eloquence of masques! what need of prose,  
Or verse or *sense* t'express immortal you."

The printed copy reads *prose* for *sense*. The rest are less important differences.

preceding letter must have been written very shortly afterwards.

With the letter, Daniel sent a Poem to Lord Ellesmere; and in 1603 was printed an Epistle "To Sir Thomas Egerton, knight," which followed "a Panegyric congratulatory" to James I. on his ascending the throne. The first may have been the production alluded to, which the author says was composed "in haste."

You will observe that Daniel adverts to his "brother's advancement" by the instrumentality of Lord Ellesmere; and the principal object of the second letter of the same poet, preserved at Bridgewater House, is to thank the Lord Keeper for this "preferment." What was the nature of it we are not informed, but it was probably procuring for him a Patent for a company of theatrical children: there is no doubt that this letter was shortly anterior in point of date to that above quoted. Daniel also mentions his incomplete poem, "The Civil Wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster," which he intended to bring down to the reign of Henry VII., but never carried farther than the marriage of Edward IV.\* The letter contains nothing regarding Shakespeare, but,

\* I have in my possession a MS. in the hand-writing of the Poet of the Fifth Book of his *Civil Wars*: it was first printed in 1602, as I apprehend, shortly prior to Samuel Daniel's Letter to Lord Ellesmere: it was called the Sixth Book in 1609, and in 1623, in which last year John Daniel affectionately published his brother's collected Works. The edition of 1609 was prepared by Samuel Daniel, when he left out several stanzas,

at the same time, it is so interesting, on account of the distinguished writer, the subject, and the person to whom it was addressed, that I shall not hesitate to insert a copy of it. Communications of the kind, by Poets of eminence of that day, are the rarest, and to me the most precious, relics.

“ Right honorable. Amongst all the great workes of your worthynes it will not be the least that you have donne for me in the preferment of my brother, with whome yet now sometimes I may eat whilst I write, and so go on with the worke I have in hand, which God knowes had long since bene ended, and your Honor had had that which in my harte I have prepared for you, could I have but sustayned my self and made truce within, and peace with the world. But such hath bene my misery, that whilst I should have written the actions of men, I have bene constrayned to live with children; and contrary to myne owne spirit put out of that scene which nature had made my parte. For could I but live to bring this labor of mine to the Union of Henry VII., I should have the end of all my ambition in this life, and the utmost of my desyres: for therein, if wordes can worke any thing vppon the affections of men, I will labor to give the best hand I can to

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among them the following relating to the family of Neville, which I quote from my MS.

“ For as the spreading members of proud Po,  
That thousand-branched Po, whose limmes imbrace  
Thy fertile and delicious bodie so,  
Sweet Lombardy, and beautify thy face;  
Such seem'd this powerful stocke, from whence did grow  
So many great discents, spreading their race,  
That everie corner of the land became  
Enricht with some great Heroes of that name.”

I may add here, as a bibliographical scrap, that *Daniel's Defence of Rhime* was originally published in the folio 1602, and not in the 8vo. 1603, as has generally been supposed.

the perpetuall closing up of those woundes, and the ever keeping them so, that our land may lothe to looke over those blessed boundes (which the providence of God hath set vs) vnto the horror and confusion of farther and former claymes. And though I know the greatnes of the worke requires a greater spirit then myne, yet we see that in theas frames of motions, little wheelles move the greater, and so by degrees turne about the whole, and God knowes what so pore a Muse as myne may worke vpon the affections of men. But howsoever I shall herein show my zeale to my country and to do that which my soule tells me is fit. And to this end do I now purpose to retyre me to my pore home, and not againe to see you till I have payd your Honor my vowes; and will onely pray that England which so much needes you may long enjoy the treasure of your counsell, and that it be not driven to complayne with that good Roman *videmus quibus extinctis jurisperitis, quam in paucis nunc spes, quam in paucioribus facultas, quam in multis audacia*. And for this comfort I have received from your goodnes I must and ever will remayne your Honors in all I ame

“SAMUEL DANYEL.”

Having, perhaps, gone a little out of my way in the insertion of the letters of the Master of the Queen's Revels, an office Shakespeare endeavoured to procure in 1603, I must now revert briefly to the draft of the Warrant of 1609, according to which, had it been carried into effect, Shakespeare would have been at the head of a Company of juvenile performers. When that draft was sent to Lord Ellesmere, some inquiry seems to have been made as to the nature and names of the “Tragedies, Comedies, &c.” which the children were to act; for in the margin of the paper are written the titles of thirteen plays, five of which are perhaps known, and eight certainly unknown. They are these —



Proud Povertie	Grisell
Widows Mite	Engl. tragedie
Antonio	False Friends
Kinsmen	Hate and love
Triumph of Truth	Taming of S.
Touchstone	K. Edw. 2.

## Mirror of Life.

*Proud Poverty* is nowhere mentioned; and the same may be said of *Widow's Mite*, *Triumph of Truth*, *Touchstone*, *Mirror of Life*, *English Tragedy*, *False Friends*, and *Hate and Love*: Anthony Munday indeed wrote a play called *The Widow's Charm*; Thomas Middleton, a Pageant called *The Triumphs of Truth*; and Kirton, a tract called *The Mirror of Man's Life*: but they could have had no other connexion with the names of plays in the margin of the draft than some similarity of title. *Antonio* may have been Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, printed in 1602, or the old play of *Antonio and Vallia*, introduced into Henslowe's Diary. *Kinsmen* was possibly *The Two Noble Kinsmen* attributed to Shakespeare and Fletcher, which was not printed until 1634. *Grisell* was doubtless some dramatic version of Boccaccio's Story of Griselda, and perhaps the comedy of *Patient Grisell*, printed anonymously in 1603, but from Henslowe's Diary ascertained to have been written by Haughton, Chettle, and Dekker. *Taming of S.* instantly brings to mind Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, or it might be the older comedy, *The Taming of a Shrew*, to which Shakespeare was indebted, and which was printed in 1594. *K Edw 2* was most likely Marlow's Tragedy of *Edward the Second*.

Of course it is impossible even to guess at the authors of the other dramatic productions, the titles of which are here inserted for the first time : perhaps more than one proceeded from the pen of Shakespeare, contributed by him in the outset of the new Company, with whom he once designed to be connected.

I shall offer no other apology for the length of this letter than by saying that, if I had consulted my own inclination, I should have made it at least four times as long, by adding a great deal of other new matter relating to Shakespeare, his works, and his fellow dramatists and actors. I wish a few other people had half your knowledge of and half your liking for such details ; but perhaps, after all, you may only have a temporary escape.

I must not conclude without expressing my personal thankfulness, and the obligations of literature, not in this instance merely, to Lord Francis Egerton : he has laid open the manuscript stores of his noble family with a liberality worthy of his rank and race ; and, if the example were followed by others possessed of similar relics, literary and historical information of great novelty and of high value might in many cases be obtained.

I remain,

My dear Amyot,

Yours most sincerely,

J. PAYNE COLLIER.

London, May 20, 1835.









